



Request for City Council Committee Action from the Department of Intergovernmental Relations

Date: February 18, 2013

To: Council Vice President Robert Lilligren and Council Member Elizabeth Glidden, Chair, Intergovernmental Relations Subcommittee and Members of the Committee

Referral to: Committee of the Whole

Department Information

Prepared by: IGR Staff

Approved by: Gene Ranieri, IGR Director _____

Presenters in Committee: Christine McDonald, NCR and Gene Ranieri, IGR Dept.

Subject: 2013 Federal Agenda

Recommendation: Amend the Policy Initiatives section by adding the following:

Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was enacted by Congress in 1994 and reauthorized in 2000 and 2005. Although the Act was not reauthorized in 2011 VAWA programs have received funding. VAWA has helped improve the criminal justice response to violence against women and ensures that victims and their families have access to the services that they need to achieve safety and rebuild their lives. The Senate has voted for the reauthorization of VAWA. The Senate bill which is authored by Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vermont) and has 60 bipartisan sponsors would protect all victims of domestic and sexual violence, including American Indian women living on reservations, college students, and members of the LGBT community.

The House bill is sponsored by Rep. Gwen Moore (D-Wisc.) and has 153 cosponsors. A vote on the House bill has not been scheduled. It is probable that the Senate bill could be amended in the House to include a provision that could differ from the inclusive nature of the Senate bill.

The City of Minneapolis supports the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act to protect all women and communities against domestic or sexual violence and firmly opposes any amendments to SF 47.

Supporting Information.

The VAWA has not only provided resources to implement programs to prevent violence against women, it has spurred state legislatures to address the issue by adopting legislation related to domestic violence and stalking. The laws vary widely and may offer a victim time off from work to address the violence in their lives or protect them from workplace

discrimination related to violence. The City of Minneapolis has implemented VAWA funded programs such as the city attorney's on-call domestic response team.

The American Indian community's members are highly mobile, often living in the city of Minneapolis and on tribal reservations. It is estimated that 34% of American Indian women will be raped in their lifetime; 67% of these victims report the assailant as non-Native. Today tribes cannot prosecute the non-Native men who commit these crimes. Looking for safety American Indian women may feel the need to leave their community while the unprosecuted men are free to stay or move to other communities to victimize again.

By supporting VAWA in its unamended form, the City of Minneapolis continues to honor the American Indian Memorandum of Understanding by promoting the health and wellbeing of the American Indian community.